

LOCATION

The Crooked River originates just north of the community of Lawson, Missouri. The mainstem river flows in a southeasterly direction and confluences with the Missouri River about three miles south of Hardin, Missouri (Figure 1). The major tributaries of the Crooked River are the East Fork Crooked River (headwaters near Polo, Missouri) and West Fork Crooked River (headwaters near Excelsior Springs, Missouri) which join the mainstem Crooked River about four miles east of the town of Richmond, Missouri. The Crooked River elevation is about 1,100 feet mean sea level (M.S.L.) at the headwaters and 675 feet M.S.L. at the mouth.

The Crooked River basin is located 30 miles east of Kansas City, Missouri and covers portions of Caldwell, Clay, Clinton and Ray counties. The population in the basin is expanding as Kansas City suburbs expand eastward into the upper reaches of the watershed (MDNR 1995). The population of Ray County in 1990 was 21,971 (Census Bureau Website). This would probably be a slight overestimation of the Crooked River basin population. Several small communities are found partially or entirely within the basin including Elmira, Hardin, Henrietta, Lawson, Polo and Rayville. The largest city in the basin is Richmond (population 5,738; 1990 U.S. Census).

The Crooked River basin is assigned watershed number 140 within the lower Missouri River basin (hydrologic code 10300101; USDA-SCS 1990). With the Crooked River basin being considered a watershed within a larger basin, statistics are hard to find that are broken down to the watershed level. Some important information specifically for the Crooked River basin was not available. Most of the Crooked River basin is in Ray County, Missouri, so where information for the basin is lacking, estimates were based on Ray County statistics and noted in the text. Every effort was made to present the best estimates and most comprehensive information that could be obtained.

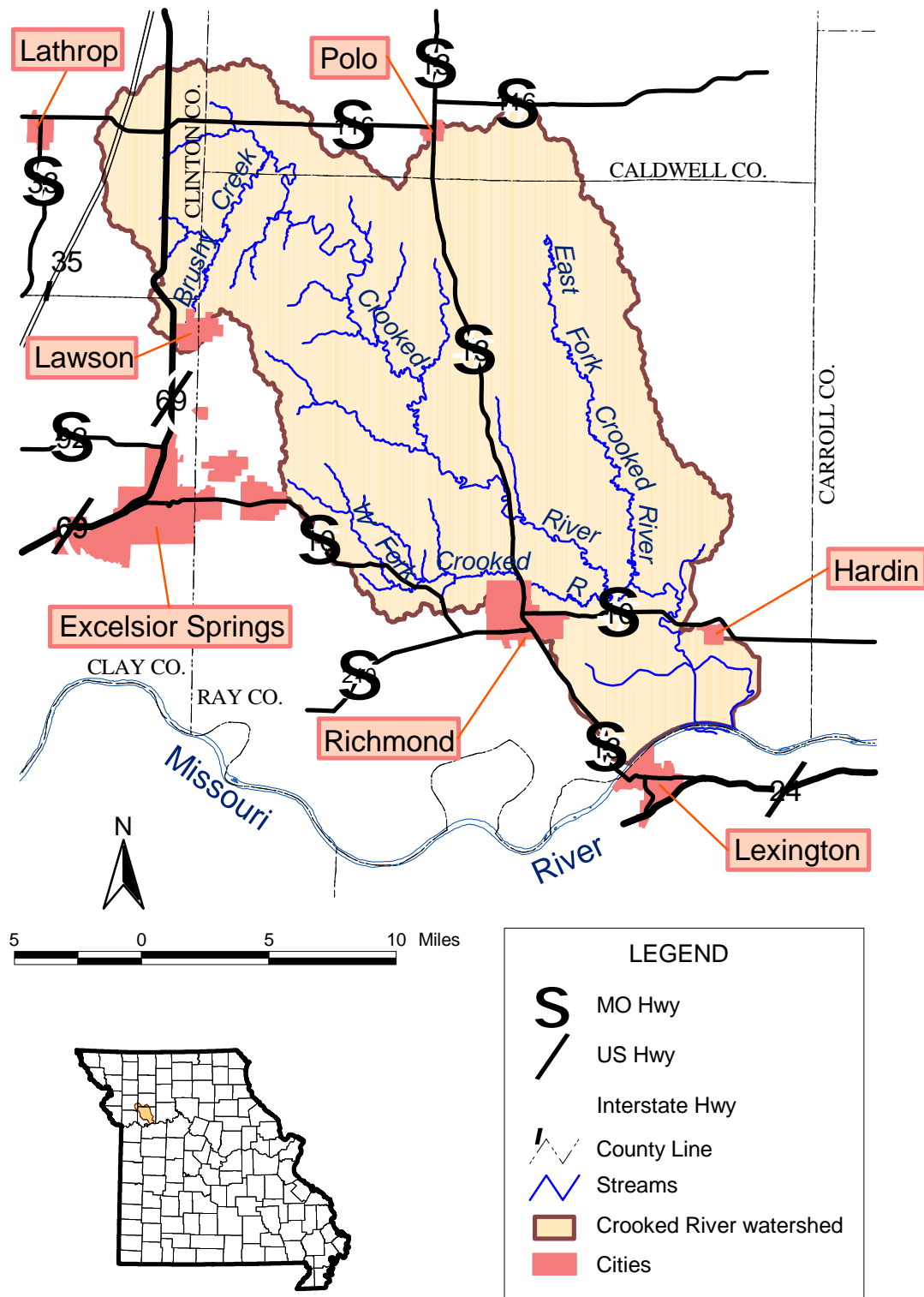


Figure 1. Crooked River watershed